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ABSTRACT

The paper describes the background and accomplishments of Job Training and Tryout, a community-based model school-to-work transition project for midly mentally handicapped young adults in Montgomery County, Maryland. Project history information touches on community linkages, pilot ventures, and initial federal funding. Three major project goals are considered: direct services, refinement of the service delivery model, and dissemination of the model. The project evaluation plan details evaluation questions, data to be gathered, and data collection/analysis procedures for four project objectives: (1) start up activities, (2) employability skills training, (3) employment assistance, (4) followup services. Accomplishments of the first two project phases are reviewed. Initial observations are recorded, including the fact that the majority of program participants had difficulties taking the Career Maturity Inventory and using public transportation. Unique features of the program are cited, including its postsecondary emphasis and the support of community agencies. The appendices include two charts on cooperating community resources and placements of participants and two data forms: Individualized Employment Success Plan and a Client Intake Survey. (CL)

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JOB TRAINING AND TRYOUT

.... A Post Secondary Program To Assist Young Adults in the Transition From School to Work

by
George Tilson, Jr. and Debra Neubert

Paper Presented at the CEC/NERRC
National Conference on
Secondary, Transitional, and Postsecondary
Education for Exceptional Youth

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The following paper presents Job Training and Tryout (JT&T), a community-based model school-to-work transition project for mildly mentally handicapped young adults, currently underway in Montgomery County, Maryland. It is the intent of the authors to provide the background for the development of the model, a description of the program components, and an account of the project's accomplishments to date.

JT&T is primarily supported by two grants from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) of the U.S. Department of Education and is sponsored by The George Washington University's Department of Special Education. The first is a three-year model demonstration grant that enables JT&T to:

- provide employability skills, employment assistance and follow-up services to handicapped individuals who are out of school and out of work, ages 18-22;
- document the success of the program;
- develop and disseminate a highly useable manual detailing the major program components and processes;
- establish and provide a systematic technical assistance approach to complement program activities and encourage replication efforts.

The second is a five-year research grant which will allow for intense evaluation of the effectiveness of JT&T as a transition program and will document the subsequent work histories of JT&T participants.

In addition to federal assistance, JT&T receives local community support from the Montgomery County (Maryland)

Association for Retarded Citizens (MCARC), the Montgomery County Public Schools' Division of Adult Education, and the Montgomery County Government's Department of Family Resources. Negotiations are underway with the county's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to determine the viability of using JT&T as a state-certified work adjustment program for clients who fall within the eligibility criteria.

Clearly, JT&T has come about in response to community needs and enjoys the cooperative backing of a variety of community resources. An historical overview of the project follows.

Historical Development of the Project Site

Over the past few years, there had been a growing concern among parent members and staff of Maryland's Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens (MCARC) and the Montgomery County Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities (MCACLD) regarding the lack of post-secondary options for handicapped individuals. These two organizations became increasingly aware of the substantial number of mildly retarded or severely learning disabled individuals who left the public school sector each year without the ability to live independently and to access employment. These individuals needed additional training to function in the community as self-supporting citizens. Community services that were available, e.g., activity centers and sheltered workshop settings, were deemed inappropriate for this population.

Concurrently, this same need for improving transitional employment services for individuals who are handicapped, "out of school and out of work" was being addressed by two other service providers, The Kiwanis International of Washington, DC, a public service organization comprised of business members of the community, and the Vocational/Special Education Program at The George Washington University cooperatively developed the Project ACCESS Employability model.

Although developed in April, 1981, it was not until the fall of 1982 that an appropriate site to implement the model was located. The design of Project ACCESS was modified by MCARC staff and vocational/special education interns. Montgomery County, in cooperation with MCARC and MCACLD had already formed a task force to address the employability needs of their clients. The program framework was available through the Project ACCESS model and both associations had volunteer networks in place which could provide the necessary personnel to serve as employee advocates and program support staff.

An additional linkage was needed to put the program in motion. In the fall of 1982, a proposal delineating the new Job Training and Tryout model was presented to the Montgomery County Public School's Division of Adult Education. This agency provides courses to upgrade skills for expansion of employment options for the post secondary population; therefore, it was deemed appropriate that the Division of

Adult Education become involved in the project. The directors of Adult Education were receptive to the idea and offered instructional space and salaries for instructor assistants.

It was decided to pilot JT&T in the spring of 1983. The pilot project was coordinated through MCARC, conducted by a graduate intern from the George Washington University's Vocational/Special Education Program and involved participants whose selection was based on the following criteria:

- individuals 18 years or older who were identified as mildly mentally retarded or severely learning disabled;
- individuals who had completed their public school education and lacked skills and abilities to obtain competitive employment;
- individuals for whom work activity centers or sheltered workshops would be inappropriate.

A surprising number of individuals met these criteria and applied for the program. Seven participants were selected and the remaining applicants were placed on a waiting list. The basic goal of the pilot program for students was to identify and practice appropriate behaviors and attitudes needed for finding and keeping a job.

Since the beginning of the federal grant cycle in September,1984, JT&T has served ten (10) individuals. An additional 15 participants will be enrolled in the program in March, 1985.

During the first six months as a federally assisted project, JT&T has been refined and expanded in a number of

ways. The employability skills curriculum and assessment procedures have been finalized, a wide range of job tryout positions have been developed within the employment community, and the project staff has conducted many publicity activities within Montgomery County and the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Major Goals of the JT&T Model Demonstration Project

The intent of JT&T is three-fold: A) To provide direct service to the target population; B) To refine the service delivery model; and C) To disseminate the model.

A. Direct Service

Job Training and Tryout provides services that assist mildly handicapped young adults make the transition from special education to initial employment experiences. The following criteria determine the eligibility of JT&T participants. These individuals must:

- be 18-22 years old;
- have expressed a personal goal for attaining competitive employment;
- have previously been enrolled in special education classes;
- have been identified as having mild mental retardation or severe learning disabilities as a primary handicapping condition;
- have previously scored between 55 and 85 on standardized IQ instruments; and
- be able to drive and/or to use public transportation.

PROGRAM PHASES

The JT&T program is delivered in three phases, i.e., Employability Skills Training, Job Tryouts, and Supported Job Search and Follow-up.

Employability Skills Training

Through six weeks of classroom and field experiences, the participants are exposed to a vast array of occupations. They discover the training requirements and working conditions of various jobs. Identification of personal occupational interests and aptitudes is a major focus and is accomplished through the administration of a vocational assessment battery that includes both formal (e.g., MESA, Apticom, Career Maturity Inventory, Coopersmith Self Concept, Social and Prevocational Information Battery, and the Nowicki-Strickland Test of Locus of Control) and informal instruments and procedures. The training also emphasizes appropriate behaviors and attitudes needed for finding and keeping suitable employment. Topics include 1) occupational and self awareness; 2) job seeking; 3) personal, social, and work adjustment; 4) effective communication and decision-making.

Job Tryouts

Based upon their identified interests and aptitudes, the participants are placed in two eight-week job tryouts in actual employment sites. These unpaid tryouts are modeled

after the concept of "internships" and are designed to provide the participants with real work experience and community contacts. JT&T staff members conduct on-site job training and provide resources to the trainees as well as to their job supervisors. Participants are evaluated on a regular basis. A weekly seminar is held in conjunction with the tryouts for the purpose of refining work behaviors, discussing current issues, and developing resumes.

Supported Job Search and Follow-up

The JT&T staff assists the participants in the job search process. The participants receive guidance in developing their resumes, contacting community job placement agencies, following job "leads," arranging interview appointments, preparing for and attending interviews, and completing applications. The degree of assistance is based on the needs of individual participants. Regular follow-up is provided by the staff for one year after initial placement. Additional on-the-job support is provided by trained volunteer job advocates. Participants and employers are encouraged to contact JT&T staff members should special needs arise.

B. Refinement of the Service Delivery Model

During the first year of the JT&T project, the staff has endeavored to further develop and refine the service delivery model. Procedures for screening program applicants, developing job tryout positions with employers, improving

data collection/recording methods, training staff, publicizing the program, expanding community linkages, etc. have been implemented.

The following evaluation plan (Table 1) reflects the intent of the JT&T staff to critically examine and monitor all phases of the program. The results of evaluation data analyses will be disseminated to the funding sources, the population served, program supporters and contributors, the professional community, project personnel, and the general public. Subsequent feedback from these sources will assist the project staff in modifying and strengthening the program. In summary, the JT&T evaluation plan serves a variety of purposes. It provides:

1.) data to program staff on which to base program decisions and short/mid/long range plans;

2.) data to program staff to reinforce existing efforts and/or to recommend new operating procedures;

3.) evaluation data to advisory committee members and funding sources to document program activities and to provide avenues for feedback;

4.) supportive evidence of the effectiveness of the program to potential participants, referral sources, volunteers, cooperative service providers and employers; and

5.) evaluation guidelines for successful replication of program components.

C. Dissemination of the Model

As stated previously, the primary purpose of the JT&T project is to refine and document a viable school-to-work

TABLE 1 EVALUATION PLAN

Program Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Process	Product	Data To be Gathered	Data Collection/ Analysis Procedures	Person Responsible for Recordkeeping/ Evaluation
1. Start-up Activities a. Interview applicants	Does the applicant meet the eligibility requirements delineated?	✓		Information indicating eligibility	Obtain data from school system, family, other service providers	Program staff/ Project Director
	Does the applicant have an expressed personal goal to be competitively employed?	✓			Personal interview Parent Questionnaire	
b. Select applicants	When did the applicant apply?	✓		Records of application		Program staff/ Project
	Did applicant supply required information and documentation?	✓		Collection of required documentation		
	How well did the expressed needs of the applicant match program goals and objectives?	✓		Information on participant interview form	Compare data collected and make decisions regarding whether or not to select applicant for program; decide when selected applicant would start program.	

Evaluation Plan cont'd d b

Program Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Process	Product	Data To be Gathered	Data Collection/ Analysis Procedures	Person Responsible for Recordkeeping/ Evaluation
c. The participant will be administered employability skills assessment	Did each eligible participant receive total assessment battery?	✓		Record of participants who were assessed	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record and employability skills assessment report	Employability skills trainer Project Director
	Were participant's strengths and areas of need identified and documented?	✓				
d. Development of Individualized Employment Success Plan (IESP)	Does each participant have an IESP on file?	✓		Record of up-to-data participant's IESP	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record	Employability skills trainer Project Director
	Are results of assessment translated into IESP goals and objectives?	✓		Assessment recommendations incorporated into participants IESP	Cross reference IESP with Employability Skills Assessment Report	
	Has the IESP been regularly reviewed and updated with the participant, staff and other relevant personnel?	✓		Indications of IESP review, comments on progress, modification of objectives/ activities, etc	Obtain data directly from IESP	

Evaluation Plan cont'd dc

Program Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Process	Product	Data To be Gathered	Data Collection/ Analysis Procedures	Person Responsible for Recordkeeping/ Evaluation
2. Employability Skills Training: a. career exploratory activities	Was the participant provided with opportunities to go on site visits?	✓		Record of participant's visiting job sites	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record	Employability Skills trainer Project Director
	Did participant attend classes in which guest speakers presented?	✓		Record of participant's class attendance	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record	
	What hands-on exploratory activities were provided?	✓		Record of exploratory activities provided	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record and weekly training plans	
	How did participant respond to these activities?		✓	Information showing part. response to activities	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record	
b. Employability Skills Classroom instruction	To what extent did participant attain objectives set forth in IESP and JTTO curriculum?		✓	Information showing pre/post performance on objectives covered during classroom instruction	Obtain data from part.; monthly evaluation record; curriculum; pre/post test	Employability skills trainer Project Director

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Evaluation Plan cont'd 8d

Program Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Process	Product	Data To be Gathered	Data Collection/ Analysis Procedures	Person Responsible for Recordkeeping/ Evaluation
c. Two six-week job try outs	Did participant complete two tryouts?	✓		Record of P participant attendance on job tryout sites	Obtain data from P monthly evaluation record	Employability skills trainer Project Director
	How did the participant perform on the job tryouts?		✓	Participant performance ratings	Obtain data from P monthly evaluation record, job tryout rating forms, participant's progress report	
	Did the participant like/dislike the tryout experiences?		✓	Information showing participant's opinion regarding like/ dislike of tryout		
	What did the participant like or dislike?		✓			
	What was the employer feedback regarding porticipant's performance?		✓	Comments from employer	Job tryout rating form	
3. Employment Assistance	Was participant hired for competitive employment?		✓	Records of participant's placements		Employment Assistance Specialist/ Project Director
	For what position was participant hired?		✓			

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Evaluation Plan cont'd Be

Program Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Process	Product	Data To be Gathered	Data Collection/ Analysis Procedures	Person Responsible for Recordkeeping/ Evaluation
	How well does the position match participant's skills and interests?		✓	IESP, Individual Work Plan Information from job analysis	Compare the requirements of The job to the participant's ability to function within the work environment to determine level of support needed.	
	What modifications need to be made at the placement site to accommodate the the participant?	✓				
	Was weekly monitoring provided?	✓				
	How much assistance did participant need in order to adjust to new job (beyond weekly monitoring)?		✓	Obtain data from Employer Rating Form		
	What are the employer's perceptions of the participant's performance?					
	Does the employment site offer career advancement opportunities?					

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Evaluation Plan cont'd bf

Program Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Process	Product	Data To be Gathered	Data Collection/ Analysis Procedures	Person Responsible for Recordkeeping/ Evaluation
4. Follow-up Services	Has the participant maintained employment position? Have site responsibilities changed since initial placement? Is the participant able to access career advancement opportunities? What is participant's level of work adjustment?		✓	Information from interviews and on-site observations Employer rating form	Compare employment success factors to employer ratings, site observations, interviews with employer and participant	Employment Assistance Specialist Project Director

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transition program that can be replicated in other areas of the country.

The development and refinement of the model itself is currently underway. Dissemination and replication will be a major focus during Year III of the project. These activities will serve as a vehicle for encouraging the promotion of cost-effective transitional programs nationally. A detailed and on-going system of project documentation and resource collection will serve as a foundation for the development of a comprehensive implementation manual to be distributed nationwide. Additionally, a well-designed publicity strategy and the provision of technical assistance will further ensure the maximum impact potential of the project.

Accomplishments to Date

Start-up Activities

Upon notification of the federal grant award for this project, start-up activities were initiated September 1, 1984. Staff positions were filled and office space was subleased from the Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens (MCARC).

The staff began immediately to identify and order instructional materials and assessment instruments for use in phase one of the project, i.e., the employability skills class. Likewise, essential office supplies were obtained.

Program availability was advertised in several ways:

- the Adult Education bulletin of course listings;
- newsletters sent out by Montgomery County Public Schools, the Association of Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, MCARC, The George Washington University;
- staff presentations to the directors and supervisors of special education in MCPS, to parents of handicapped individuals at a forum sponsored jointly by a number of local service providers, to employer groups (e.g., Kiwanis of D.C.), and to university classes;
- announcement in **The Washington Post**.

Participant application forms and intake interview protocols were refined; in late-September, 1984 the staff began interviewing applicants for the first employability skills class.

It should be noted that in August, 1984, The George Washington University was notified that its proposal to use the JT&T project as a site for a research study was funded by OSERS. Negotiations were undertaken to combine the resources of the two grant awards. A project director and research assistant for the research grant were appointed October 1, 1984. Although there are clear delineations between these grants, many of the start-up activities overlapped; the project directors of both the demonstration and research projects collaborated on the supervision of participant assessment, planning, and service delivery, worked jointly to publicize JT&T, and gathered resources for the project. Additional start-up activities were conducted by the combined JT&T staffs:

- Back-ground data on each applicant were gathered e.g., most recent psychological reports, vocational evaluation reports, and medical histories.

- Ten (10) participants were selected for and enrolled in JT&T. These individuals comprised a pilot group for the purpose of field-testing the assessment instruments/procedures and the revised Employability Skills Curriculum.

- The employability skills curriculum was revised from ten weeks (as conducted during the pilot year prior to federal assistance) to six weeks;

- An orientation session was conducted by the JT&T staff for parents of the participants.

- A uniform recordkeeping and data collection system was established.

- The project director met with a variety of community service providers (public and private) for the purpose of networking with agencies dedicated to the employment preparation of handicapped individuals. (Appendix is a list of these agencies and their relationship to the JT&T project.)

- The principal investigator presented JT&T at the American Vocational Association annual conference in New Orleans.

Participant Assessment and Development of IESP

Each participant was administered several assessment instruments to measure his/her level of career maturity (Career Maturity Inventory); level of vocational awareness (MESA Vocational Awareness subtest); and occupational interest areas (MESA Interest subtest). In addition to these formal instruments, the staff administered an informal pretest of the JT&T Employability Skills Curriculum.

Data gathered from this assessment battery were incorporated into the initial Individualized Employment Success Plan (IESP) for each participant, as were data from

the intake interview and participant records. (Refer to Appendices 3 and 4 for sample IESP form and intake interview protocol, respectively.)

Several of the participants were administered the APTICOM assessment battery in addition to the above. This first group of participants was considered a pilot group for the assessment procedures. The goal of the staff was to field test a number of instruments to determine their appropriateness for the target group and the actual administration time required. The staff made a number of observations about the instruments used. These are discussed in the section titled "Preliminary Findings."

Staff and Participant Activities During Phase I

The first employability skills class began in early November, 1984 and was conducted at the Adult Education Center of Montgomery County Schools. Class sessions were held four half-days per week for a total of six weeks. The decision to compress the original ten-week training period into six weeks was based on input from staff members who had been involved with the pilot project the previous year. Feedback from the pilot participants had indicated some reluctance to attend a classroom-based training program for as long as ten weeks, regardless of the amount of hands-on activities (e.g., work samples) and site visits. After six weeks many of the pilot participants were voicing a

preference for starting their job tryout experiences rather than attending class. With this in mind, the current project staff elected to shorten the classroom phase to six weeks by combining topics, eliminating many of the pen and paper activities and increasing hands-on exercises. The staff observations of the trial six-week class are noted in the "Preliminary Findings" section.

In addition to conducting the employability skills training with the entire class, the instructor provided individualized career counseling to each participant. This one-to-one activity enabled the staff to target particular problem areas unique to the individual and to make recommendations for intervention and possible solution to those problem areas.

To date, weekly staffings have been conducted with the instructor, project director, and other staff personnel in order to discuss each participant's progress. Changes and/or recommendations have been regularly noted on each IESP. When the staff determined that interventions beyond the scope of JT&T were necessary, special staffings were arranged with the participant and his/her parent and recommendations were presented. It should be noted that, in all cases, the staff endeavored to work directly with the participants in assisting them to identify their own areas of limitation and to remediate these difficulties themselves, wherever feasible with support from the staff.

Concurrently with the classroom instruction, the staff

devoted much effort to developing potential job tryout positions in the community. Development activities ranged from making cold contacts with employers (and subsequently meeting with them to discuss the JT&T project) to actually arranging for appropriate participants to interview with the employers. Thirty-six (36) potential tryout positions were developed. Please refer to Appendix 2 for a list of tryout sites currently being utilized by JT&T participants.

During this time period Tryout Agreement contracts were refined as were methods/procedures for evaluating the participants on their tryouts.

By mid-December, 1984 ten participants had completed the first phase of the program, i.e., the employability skills training.

Staff and Participant Activities During Phase II

In January, 1985 the participants went on interviews with employers for the purpose of securing tryout positions. These interviews were prearranged by the staff. At the present time all ten of the participants are completing their first tryouts and preparing for their second tryouts.

The staff conducts mid and final situational assessments during each participant's tryout experience. The instructors are responsible for 1) conducting a job and task analysis of each tryout position; 2) completing a Tryout Agreement contract with each cooperating employer; 3) providing training to the participant, on the job site,

during the first week of the tryout; and 4) monitoring the participant weekly, through telephone or on-site contact with the cooperating supervisor.

At the completion of the first tryouts, the instructor will survey the cooperating employers for their input and suggestions as to improving the tryout procedures. The employers will also be asked to evaluate the participants' performance using the same situational assessment instrument used by the staff. Presently the instructor is developing second tryout positions.

The following is a list of other activities currently being undertaken by the JT&T staff:

- Project director meets regularly with primary community supporting agency (MCARC) and maintains contact with other cooperating agencies (e.g., Division of Adult Education, and Dept. of Family Resources-Montgomery County Government);
- Staff refers applicants not eligible for JT&T to other community service providers;
- Staff designed program brochures which were printed by Montgomery County Public Schools;
- Project Director sent program information and applications to all Montgomery County principals whose schools serve Level 4 special education students; also mailed letters and press releases to thirty local radio,television, and newspaper public service directors;
- Staff conducted second parent/participant meeting to orient them to the tryout phase of JT&T;
- Project Director conducted weekly staff meetings and group working sessions;
- Staff cooperated with The George Washington University's Special Education STTEP programs to provide placements and supervision for two graduate interns.
- Each staff member has maintained a daily log of his/

her activities, documenting critical incidents and recording resource materials and contact persons;

- Staff refined the Employability Skills Curriculum and developed a six-week course syllabus;
- Staff refined the informal pre/posttest of Employability Skills curriculum;
- Staff is evaluating current applications for the second JT&T participant group; Interviews, selection, and assessment will occur mid-February, 1985 until mid-March, 1985.
- Staff refined the format for the weekly work adjustment seminars (in conjunction with tryout experiences);Seminars began on February 1, 1985 and were conducted by the instructor and graduate intern.
- Photographs of the participants on their job tryout sites are being produced into slides;
- Staff has been available for crisis intervention e.g., when participant calls saying he/she is stranded at a busstop, or when a problem has arisen on the job site;
- Staff conducted travel training when necessary;
- Established linkages with Adult Education to provide adapted courses (e.g., data entry and typing) to JT&T participants desiring such introductory training.

Accomplishments Anticipated by End of First Year

By August 31, 1985 twenty participants will have been served by phases one and two of the JT&T project. It is anticipated that these individuals will be receiving services outlined in phase three: Supported Job Search and Follow-up.

Other anticipated activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- JT&T staff will co-conduct training sessions for volunteer advocates (for long-term job maintenance support);
- Staff will design and construct wide assortment of

work samples to be used in the subsequent employability skills classes;

- Staff will present JT&T to the national CEC/NERRC conference on transition in Boston (March 8, 1985); to Montgomery County Chapter of CEC (April conf.); to the Mont. County Task Force on Transition, to a joint seminar between the vocational and special education departments of the Univ. of Maryland; and to the Job Placement classes at George Washington University;

- Project Director will develop preliminary format for replication manual;

- Staff will continue to establish and/or strengthen linkages with postsecondary institutions in order to assist them in developing adapted introductory vocational training courses.

Preliminary Findings

The JT&T staff is pleased with the progress that has been made since the initial start-up date. Deviation from the originally proposed project plan has been slight with regards to the three service delivery phases. Most of the modifications have centered around the timeline for service delivery. Delayed notification of funding dictated that the entire timeline to be shifted. Some of the observations made by the JT&T staff appear below:

- Inappropriate referrals, i.e., of individuals that clearly did not meet the eligibility criteria, prompted the staff to better inform referral sources of the entrance criteria. Even after this intervention it was noted that the same sources continued refer ineligible applicants. There appears to be a great demand for programs such as JT&T for individuals representing a wide range of handicapping conditions and ability levels.

- The majority of the applicants who met the eligibility requirements and who were subsequently interviewed and accepted into the program, demonstrated woefully inadequate skills in the areas of vocational awareness, self-awareness, job-seeking,

and problem-solving. While the staff had expected these skills to need refinement, it was surprised by the generally low level of demonstrated ability. Most of the participants had received some form of career education while in high school; some had received vocational evaluations; and some had even participated in regular vocational classes.

- The staff noted difficulties exhibited by most of the participants when taking the Career Maturity Inventory. Although the true/false statements were read aloud by the test administrators it appeared that the participants were not comprehending many of the items and were randomly selecting their responses. This test and others will be further field-tested on the next group of participants. Results of the field testing will be documented.

- Of ten participants, two-thirds had never used public transportation on their own. This necessitated training by JT&T staff. Several of the participants and their parents did not want to use public transportation. They had to be convinced that an inability to access transportation independently raised some doubts about one's preparation for competitive employment. The participants were required to drive or to use public transportation to their job tryout sites.

- The staff encountered some difficulty in scheduling the tryouts and finalizing placement arrangements. Although the tryout positions had been developed, initial logistics such as obtaining final clearance from employers, determining public transportation routes to the sites,etc. caused some delay in job tryout start-up time.

- The employers who have agreed to work with JT&T participants have been enthusiastic supporters. The staff has refined its approach with employers and this seems to be having a positive impact on the development of a wide range of tryout positions.

- Feedback from employers as well as staff observations indicate that it seems to take approximately three weeks for participants to adjust to the new tryout experience. The staff will consider this information in planning for future tryouts.

Plans for Year Two of the Project

It is anticipated that an additional thirty individuals will be served by the JT&T project during year two. Twenty individuals would participate in the Fall of 1985 and ten in the Spring of 1986.

The same procedures outlined earlier in this paper would be followed next year.

Additional activities will include:

- extended assessment to include the entire MESA vocational evaluation system, the Career Maturity Inventory, a self-concept and locus of control scale, and the informal pretest of the employability skills curriculum;
- depending on what vocational areas need increased awareness activities, additional work samples will be developed for the class phase of the project;
- job tryout sites will be expanded;
- Project director will conduct planning sessions for manual development; preliminary draft will be written and critiqued;
- Increased training of volunteer job advocates to support JT&T graduates;
- Continue to develop community linkages for program support and to encourage expanded entry-level vocational training opportunities;
- Continue to present JT&T to other professionals, the employment community, and other interested parties.

VI. SUMMARY

Job Training and Tryout is a program that has demonstrated, during its pilot stage last year and now, in

its first six months of operation as a federally assisted project, that it is a viable model for assisting out-of-school young adults in obtaining crucial employability skills training through a combination of coursework and job tryouts. This is certainly a major step in the transition of these individuals from school to work.

A unique feature of the project is its postsecondary emphasis. From the moment participants apply to JT&T they are approached by the staff as adults. While parents are encouraged to be involved, the staff stresses that the participants, as adults, are accountable for their degree of participation in the program. The conditions for participation are well-defined and each participant is required to sign an agreement form. Since direct staff intervention is only twenty-two weeks, the participants know they will be confronted immediately about behaviors that could affect their future career directions.

Classes are conducted in an Adult Education Center and participants are encouraged to enroll in entry-level vocational training courses offered by the adult education department, at Montgomery College, and anywhere else in the community where such opportunities may be available.

A second unique feature of JT&T is that it enjoys the support of a number of community agencies. (Refer to Appendix 1 "Cooperating Community Agencies.") It was due to this support that the project was piloted for a year prior to

gaining federal assistance. The fact that this support was initially community-generated and that it continues to be present during the federal grant period bodes well for the project as a community-supported effort in the future.

The grant from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services assists the project in beginning a period of refinement and sets the stage for dissemination activities to be planned in year two of the project and implemented in year three.

Any persons interested in learning more about the Job Training and Tryout model demonstration and research projects should contact either George Tilson, Jr. or Debra Neubert, Project Directors, JT&T.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Cooperating Community Resources Supporting JT&T

Field Cooperator	Material Resources Support	Support Services/Resources
Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens (MCARC)	• staff - 2/5 time devoted to JTTO activities	• access to professional library/resources • co-development of model • co-implementation of program • liaison with employers • training of staff/volunteers • supervision support • public relations efforts • advisory committee • publicity
Montgomery County Public Schools -- Division of Adult Education	• salaries for course instructors at Montgomery College • classroom space for Employability Skills Training • printing brochures	• access to adult education courses offering vocational training • cooperative progress planning • program modifications for special needs students • advisory committee
Montgomery College	• classroom space for evening courses • trained interns from HACP to provide 1-1 client support in instruction	• individualized instruction to complement and reinforce program efforts • program modifications for special needs students • advisory committee
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)	• participant referral	• client assessment • referral • employer contacts
Employers		• job tryout/placement sites • training/supervision/ evaluation • assist in expanding employer network • participation of advisory committee

Field Cooperator	Material Resources Support	Support Services/Resources
Parents	• informational and advocacy materials for employers, parents and community	• referral and input • reinforcement of IESP components at home • serve as volunteers to support program efforts • assure that relevant information is available to staff
Volunteers		• job advocates for identifying potential jobs and follow-up to support employed clients • classroom assistance
George Washington University (GWU)	• consultation	• co-development of model • co-implementation of program • staff & volunteer training • provision of instructional resources • program publicity • provision & supervision of interns
Public Schools	• educational records	• program support • referral • advisory committee
Montgomery County Association for Citizens with Learning Disabilities (MCALD)	• resource materials • training programs • job bank	• referral • program support • publicity • training volunteers • information and referral services
Montgomery County Government	• OJT funding based upon eligibility	• program support • training subsidies

APPENDIX 2

Current Tryout Placements of JT&T Participants

Cooperating Employer	Status	Job Tryout Position
Direct Tech	Private	Mail Sorter
Kramer Systems	Private	Shipping/Receiving Clerk
WTTG-TV - Channel 5	Private	Office Assistant
Potomac Florists	Private	Floral Assistant
George Washington University	Private	Office Assistant
Homer Opticals	Private	Optical Technician
Bechtel	Private	Office Assistant
Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens	Private	Office Assistant
Montgomery County Government	Public	Liquor Control Warehouse Worker
Montgomery County Government	Public	Building Maintenance Worker

INDIVIDUALIZED EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS PLAN (IESP)

Name_____ S.S.#_____

Coordinator_____

Initial Team Staffing

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Present level(s) of performance:

Academic:

Personal-social:

Vocational:

Comments:

INTERN _____

JOB TRYOUT # _____

_____

_____

JOB TITLE: _____ SUPERVISOR: _____

JOB DUTIES: (Describe briefly)

Specific Job Tasks	Achieved Date	Not Achieved	Evaluator

Summary of Contacts: (date, person, reason)

Employability Skills Classroom Training

Employment Success Goal(s)

Short-term Objectives	Intervention Strategies	Achieved Date	Not Achieved

Comments:

DATA RECORD

JT&T PRE-POST INVENTORY

General Career/Self Awareness:

Job Sources:

Job Application:

Job Interview:

Job Maintenance:

Interpersonal Relationships:

Decision-Making:

Communication Strategies:

Resume:

Expressed Vocational Interests:

Expressed Vocational Awareness:

Initial Career Goal:

Summary of Staff Meeting Decisions/Recommendations:

Placement Goal(s): (at completion of Employability Skills Training)

Other Recommendations: (such as Vocational Training, Adult Ed. courses)

APPENDIX 4

JOB TRAINING & TRYOUT (JT&T)
11699 Nebel Street
Rockville, MD 20852
(301)468-0913

CLIENT INTAKE SURVEY

1. Name: _____ 2. Social Security # _____

3. Last school attended: _____ 4. Did you graduate? _____

5. What classes did you take in High School? ___ Vocational classes

_____
_____
_____

___ Work Study
___ In school shadowing experience
___ Vocational evaluation

6. What have you done since graduation?

a. Have you taken any classes?

b. Have you had any work experience?

1 - Yes Part-time ___ Paid ___
2 - No Full-time ___ Unpaid ___

If yes, place, title, duties, reason for leaving.

c. What do you do for recreation?

7. What is your living situation?

a. Do you have any responsibilities around the house?

8. Do you have any hobbies?

9. Do you have any job skills?

10. What do you feel are your strengths?

11. What do you feel are your weaknesses?

12. Why do you feel it's important to work?

13. Why do you want to be in this program?

14. Describe several jobs that you might like to do.

15. What would you like to be doing 10 years from now?
(Discuss long term career goals.)

16. Do you have any questions?

[Note to interviewer: Explain Research Component.]

General Impressions:
(presentation of self, communication, etc.)

Accept: ____ Date _____

Not Accept: ____ Date _____

Reason for Non-acceptance:

Suggested Alternatives: